persons born into servitude, but there was no strict rule. A docile prisoner who served his master well could come to be considered a family slave, while a born slave who was lazy or troublesome could be degraded to chattel slavery. Chattel slaves simply represented so much wealth and their power over each could be sold or sold. Family slaves, on the other hand, were united to their owners by ties of affection and were very rarely sold. The master could sell them, but such an act would be reprehended by the whole village. Families which had been slaves for three or four generations acquired a certain status in the village. They were permitted to own property, had their own tombs, and could only be sold if guilty of some crime. A slave family of this sort would be attached to some lineage and its economic status would differ little from that of a free family. After the Wassile came under the domination of the Imerina empire, free persons were occasionally enslaved for debt, but this was always rare and the slavery was light. The individual was considered as a pledge rather than a true slave, for his lineage would make every possible effort to redeem him. A slave who had been redeemed by his relatives at once regained his social position.

Chattel slaves were also freed by their master and would then become domiciliated to his family as clients. These, their descendants, and the offspring of certain marriages between slave and free formed a class of free clients who were socially intermediate between the slaves and the lords. Individuals of this class might rise to wealth and importance in the community, but they were debarred from holding office and from burial in the village tomb.

During the reign of Andrianampoinimerina, founder of the Imerina empire, a third class arose into existence among the Menabe. The *Zafiakotry* *gens*, which had been defeated by its neighbors, tendered voluntary submission to him. He helped it to conquer several of the other *gentes* and recognized it as the ruling *gens* for this division of the Tamala. All the *Zafiakotry* then assumed the rank of *andriana*, i.e. nobles, while their chief became a king. Although the assumption of *andriana* rank brought with it social prestige, most of the *Zafiakotry* continued to live in their own *gens* territory and to cultivate their own land, etc. The conquered *gentes* recognized the authority of the *Zafiakotry* chief, but they paid no tribute to the *Zafiakotry* *gens*, nor were they displaced from their land.

The Tamala Ikongo were also divided into three classes, called *hova*, *mainka* and *olom*. These corresponded to the *andriana*, *hova*, and *olom* classes of the Menabe. All that has been said of